

STATEMENT OF
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U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON
COAST GUARD & MARITIME TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee, my name is David L. Winstead. I am Commissioner of the General Services Administration's (GSA's) Public Buildings Service. I am pleased to have this opportunity to appear before you today to discuss GSA's efforts to develop an outstanding new headquarters for the United States Coast Guard on the St. Elizabeths Hospital West Campus.

The St. Elizabeths West Campus is a 176-acre site located in the Anacostia neighborhood of Southeast Washington, DC. It is a National Historic Landmark. The campus is comprised of 61 buildings containing 1.1 million gross square feet of space, abundant landscaped open space, a Civil War cemetery for veterans from both sides of that conflict, and stunning views of the surrounding area. It is located proximate to Capitol Hill.

GSA acquired St. Elizabeths West Campus in December 2004 from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, which no longer needed the site. We took this action because we have identified a substantial need over the next decade for secure Federal office space in the National Capital Region. Given the density of development in Washington, DC, acquiring a large, contiguous area where a secure campus could be created to meet a portion of this need is a difficult feat, yet GSA will be able to do this at St. Elizabeths.

In February 2005, President George W. Bush's budget requested funds for GSA to start planning for a new U.S. Coast Guard headquarters facility at St. Elizabeths. Congress agreed to appropriate \$24.9 million in FY 06 for the design of this new complex, along with \$13.1 million for site infrastructure. Last month, the President asked that \$306 million be appropriated to GSA in FY 07 to begin construction. We are planning for occupancy of the new facility to begin in 2010.

GSA is excited to have this opportunity to develop a new headquarters complex for one of the key components of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Coast Guard has a long and noble tradition of service to our country, both during peace and during war. Their new headquarters, consisting of 1.3 million gross square feet, excluding parking, will give them the setting, the architecture, and the world class workspace that they deserve.

We are now working closely with the Coast Guard as we prepare a master plan for the development of the campus, and we are preparing to begin design on their new headquarters.

Given the size of the St. Elizabeths campus, we are also studying the possibility of locating other DHS elements on site along with the Coast Guard, to bring development up to a potential total of 4.5 million gross square feet, exclusive of parking. The secure campus would combine new construction with the reuse of some of the historic buildings on site.

You have specifically asked GSA to respond to the transportation issues posed by the development of this campus. The Committee should be assured that GSA is developing a detailed plan to manage all transportation issues and to provide road access to the site well before Coast Guard begins occupancy of the campus. Accordingly, I will devote the balance of my statement to that subject.

At present, St. Elizabeths West Campus is only accessible from Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue. While Interstate 295 forms the western border for the site, and Suitland Parkway and South Capitol Street are nearby, none of these routes provides direct access to the site. There are two Washington Metro stations that serve the site, Anacostia, which is a quarter-mile away, and Congress Heights, a half-mile away, both on the Green Line.

We are gathering important data to inform the site planning effort – for example, there is significant interest among Coast Guard employees in finding alternatives to driving to work alone. We also know that 93 percent of their employees are evenly split between living in Virginia and Maryland, while the remaining 7 percent live in the District. The employee transportation survey work will be expanded to include employees of the other DHS elements who will be moving to the site once they are identified.

The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) has a goal for Federal facilities in DC of one parking place for every four employees. Assuming that 14,000 employees will be located on the campus at full build-out, this would allow for a total of 3,500 spaces. The Coast Guard has indicated on a preliminary basis that it believes for a variety of reasons that a 1:3 parking

ratio is more appropriate. We are working with the Coast Guard to prepare a Transportation Management Plan that makes the case for a specific number of parking spaces. That Plan will be part of the NCPC master plan review process.

Obviously, providing adequate transportation access is crucial for a campus that could house up to 14,000 people. GSA is actively and regularly engaged in meetings with the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT), the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, the Maryland Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration. We are also conferring on a regular basis with the Virginia Department of Transportation. I want to recognize DDOT for their leadership in recognizing the transportation issues that are posed by development east of the Anacostia River and their efforts to find workable and timely solutions.

The purpose of these meetings is to provide a multi-faceted program to improve transportation access and services to the neighborhood as well as to St. Elizabeths. The program we are developing will be finalized as part of our campus master plan and Environmental Impact Statement, projected to be complete in August of 2007.

There are several transportation improvements currently underway or planned for the area including:

- By 2010, GSA intends to acquire land and construct a new access road to the northwestern corner of the campus from Firth Sterling Avenue.

Firth Sterling has immediate access to South Capitol Street and Suitland Parkway, both of which connect to Interstate 295.

- By 2014, GSA intends to acquire land from the National Park Service and construct another access road connecting the southwestern corner of the campus to Malcolm X Avenue, which immediately connects to Interstate 295.

- DDOT has received a portion of the funding needed to construct roadway improvements along South Capitol Street and Suitland Parkway. The roadway improvements beneficial to the St. Elizabeths West Campus include a new interchange at Suitland Parkway and Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and intersection improvements at Suitland Parkway and Firth Sterling. However, DDOT still needs additional funding to construct the new interchange at South Capitol Street/Suitland Parkway/Interstate 295. All of these improvements are scheduled to be complete by 2015, assuming funding is available.

- To improve the flow of traffic across the Anacostia River, DDOT has secured funding to replace the 11th Street Bridges, with a design that will separate local and regional traffic. This is scheduled for completion in 2011.

- DDOT has also received funding to replace and realign the Frederick Douglass Bridge, which carries South Capitol Street across the Anacostia River. This is scheduled for completion in 2012.

- GSA is exploring the possibility of express bus service from park-and-ride lots in suburban areas with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and the Maryland and Virginia transit agencies, as demand warrants.

- We are working with the Coast Guard to explore establishing a shuttle bus service connecting the two nearby Metro stations to St. Elizabeths. This is now possible because of Congress's passage last August of Public Law 109-59, The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, which authorized Federal agencies to provide transit service between a place of Federal employment and a mass transit station.

- We are also working with Bolling Air Force Base and the Anacostia Naval Station on developing joint transportation solutions that will benefit the Coast Guard, Air Force, Navy, and Defense Intelligence Agency employees.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, GSA is committed to developing St. Elizabeths West Campus as a first class facility to house several of the agencies helping to protect our country from terrorist attack. Part of that commitment is to ensure that the employees working on campus have safe, convenient and efficient transportation access to and from their jobs. GSA will continue to explore additional options, both as part of our master planning process, and subsequently as we build out the campus.

Thank you for providing this opportunity for GSA to appear before you. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.